

September 2011 Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) Training for the Indian Health Service

On September 21-23, 2011, the University of Washington Fetal Alcohol and Drug Unit (FADU), in collaboration with the Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board and Indian Health Service, presented a 3-day FASD training to eighteen Visiting Scholars from approximately ten Tribal communities. Most were from Northwest tribes, but two were from Red Lake, Minnesota, and two were from Lake County Tribal Health in Lakeport, California.

The two days of faculty presentations provided a history and overview of FASD and focused primarily on areas of concern to all Native communities: addiction, suicide, sexual offending, and law violation and the link to FASD. Effective approaches to prevent and treat these problems were provided. The third training day was an observation of the FASD diagnostic process at the UW Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Diagnostic Prevention Network (FASDPN) clinic; a presentation of the Parent Child Assistance Program (PCAP) model and how it can be tailored to meet the needs of individual AI/AN communities; and a discussion of next steps for each community represented.

See below for

Training Faculty

Topics covered on Days 1, 2, and 3

Visiting Scholars' comments

Training Faculty

Richard Adler, M.D., Adult, Adolescent and Child Psychiatrist and Medical Director of FASDExperts; an FASD diagnostic team working in forensic settings throughout the U.S.

Albert Allick, M.D., Psychiatrist and Acting Director of Red Lake Hospital, Red Lake, MN.

David Boulding, Attorney at Law and an internationally known FASD trainer.

Natalie Novick Brown, Ph.D., Psychologist specializing in clinical evaluation and treatment of people who have FASDs. Dr. Brown is also a member of FASDExperts.

Paul Connor, Ph.D., Neuropsychologist specializing in FASD and a member of FASDExperts.

Julian Davies, M.D., Pediatrician and FASD diagnostician at the UW FASDPN and Co-Director of the Center for Adoption Medicine.

Therese Grant, Ph.D., Epidemiologist, Director of UW FADU and the statewide Parent-Child Assistance Program (PCAP); an FASD prevention program.

Kathryn Kelly, Project Director of the FASD Legal Issues Resource Center, FADU.

Suzie Kuerschner, MEd, FASD Consultant and Child Development Specialist working with Tribal Communities nationally and internationally.

Richard Ries, M.D., Psychiatrist, certified in Addiction Medicine, Co-Chair of the UW Addiction Psychiatry Residency Program, Director of Outpatient Psychiatry, Dual Disorder and Chemical Dependency Project at Harborview Medical Center.

Charlene Takeuchi, M.A., Clinical Director of Kitsap County Parent-Child Assistance Program (PCAP).

Anthony Wartnik, Judge (ret.) served 34 years as a trial judge, 24 years of which were with King County Superior Court. Judge Wartnik chaired the Governor's Advisory Panel on FAS. He is now the Legal Director of FASDExperts.

Nancy Whitney, M.S., Clinical Director of King County Parent-Child Assistance Program (PCAP).

Topics covered on Days 1, 2, and 3

Day 1

- The day began with Morgan Fawcett's flute (via his CD) to celebrate his many gifts and his philosophy that his diagnosis of FASD is only a part of who he is; and a prayer from Suzie Kuerschner.
- Therese Grant gave an overview of FASD. Dr. Grant and Dr. Paul Connor spoke on the effects of FASD, physically and behaviorally, as well as how to prevent adverse life outcomes. The Visiting Scholars were asked to advise us (via an anonymous form) on the relevance of each presentation to their work. A Visiting Scholar commented, "This information needs to be presented on the Tribal Council level."
- Rich Adler spoke about the mental health issues of children born exposed to alcohol and other drugs. A Visiting Scholar wrote, "I found this area to be particularly relevant and helpful."
- Natalie Novick Brown talked about FASD and inappropriate sexual behavior. A Visiting Scholar wrote, "This presentation brought out some aspects I hadn't thought of (especially the suggestibility aspect)."
- Anthony Wartnik talked about FASD and trouble with the law from the perspective of the court. He also talked about FASDExperts; the FASD diagnostic team that assists in court cases throughout the U.S. Most Scholars found the information very useful. One wrote, "I'm impressed with the team of experts and their passion for their work".
- The evening ended with dinner for the Visiting Scholars, spouses and close friends as well as some of the Training Faculty at Ivar's Salmon House, a restaurant on Lake Union which is modeled after a Longhouse.

Day 2

- Julian Davies spoke about diagnosing FASD and follow-up referrals. The Visiting Scholars all found the presentation very useful.
- A 20 minute film was shown; "A Child for Life", a documentary about children and adults with FASD as well as their families was praised with one Visiting Scholar noting, "The movie was very informative, we should all have it."
- David Boulding talked about taking a different approach in working with those with cognitive challenges. One Scholar commented "I really enjoyed the role play. I learn better from this type of format than straight lecture." Another said "The importance of this talk has meant the most to me."
- Kay Kelly talked about FASD and addiction and strategies for strengthening the individual with FASD in order to improve their outcome in treatment. All Scholars reported finding the presentation very useful.

- Nancy Whitney discussed how to communicate effectively with clients with cognitive challenges. One scholar commented “This was the most useful talk of both days. Very practical -- gave me tools to use with my patients. It would be great to have a DVD of this talk to share with my staff.”
- Suzie Kuerschner spoke about building community readiness for FASD awareness and diagnosis. A Visiting Scholar wrote, “This was a very useful and meaningful presentation that will inform my work.”
- Albert Allick, Therese Grant, Kay Kelly and Richard Ries talked about the link between FASD and suicide. Dr. Ries then talked about the link between addiction and suicide. One Scholar commented “Very thought provoking. I never fully got the connection between ETOH (alcohol/ethanol) and suicide.”

Day 3 was held at the UW Center on Human Development and Disability, UW School of Medicine.

- Observation of the process of FASD diagnosis at the Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Diagnostic and Prevention Network (FASDPN) began with an overview by Clinic Director Susan Astley for all the Visiting Scholars. They were then divided into two groups with the morning group observing, through one way mirrors, interviews with the patient and with the parents/caregivers and then observing the meeting of the diagnostic team to review the material and discuss the diagnosis.
- While the morning group observed at clinic, the other group listened to a presentation by Therese Grant and Charlene Takeuchi on FASD prevention through the Parent Child Assistance Program (PCAP) intervention model. The group then heard a presentation by Suzie Kuerschner on the development of an FASD diagnostic clinic in Indian Country. At mid-day the groups reversed and the afternoon group observed the clinic and the morning group heard the PCAP and development of a diagnostic clinic presentations. At the closing the entire group met together, talked about next steps and decided to keep in touch through an email list which FADU will set up.

Concluding comments from Visiting Scholars:

“This was the best training I have ever attended-helped me to have a better understanding of my clients....”

“This has given me lots of great ideas to implement in our clinic and to take to other departments.”

“Training/diagnosis needs to happen in my community.”